



M.J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.
GOVERNOR

David W. Hood J.
Secretary
Department of
Health & Hospitals
P. O. Box 629
Baton Rouge, LA
70821-0629

L. Hall Bohlinger
Secretary
Department of
Environmental Quality
P. O. Box 82215
Baton Rouge, LA
70884-2215

James H. Jenkins, Jr.
Secretary
Department of
Wildlife & Fisheries
P. O. Box 98000
Baton Rouge, LA
70898-9000

The following fish consumption advisory was issued on 05/29/03 by the Department of Health & Hospitals, the Department of Environmental Quality, and the Department of Wildlife & Fisheries. For more information, please contact:

DHH
Shannon Soileau
(504) 568-8537

DEQ
Chris Roberie
(225) 765-0634

DWF
Glenn Thomas
(225) 765-2343

FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORY FOR BAYOU PLAQUEMINE BRULE

Based on fish sampling in Acadia Parish, unacceptable levels of mercury have been detected in largemouth bass, crappie (sac-a lait), freshwater drum (gaspergou), and bowfin (choupique, grinnel) taken from Bayou Plaquemine Brule near Jennings. This area includes Bayou Plaquemine Brule from its origin near Opelousas in St. Landry Parish to where it enters the Mermentau River. **This advisory supersedes a previous advisory issued for this water body by the state in October of 1996.** Therefore, the Louisiana Departments of Health & Hospitals, Environmental Quality, and Wildlife & Fisheries advise that the following precautions be taken when eating fish taken from Bayou Plaquemine Brule:


- **Women of childbearing age and children less than seven years of age SHOULD NOT CONSUME bowfin and should consume no more than ONE MEAL PER MONTH of largemouth bass, crappie, or freshwater drum combined from the advisory area (a meal is considered to be half a pound of fish for adults and children.)**
- **Other adults and children seven years of age or older should consume no more than TWO MEALS PER MONTH of bowfin and no more than FOUR MEALS PER MONTH of largemouth bass, crappie, or freshwater drum combined from the advisory area (a meal is considered to be half a pound of fish for adults and children).**

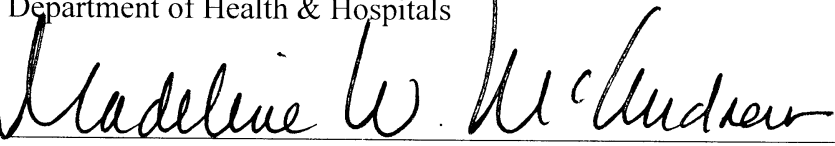
- **Unless the fish species is specifically addressed in the details of the advisory, please limit consumption of all species in an advisory area to 4 meals per month. Louisiana fish consumption advisories are based on the estimate that the average Louisiana resident eats 4 fish meals per month (1 meal = ½ pound). If you or your family members eat more than 4 meals of fish a month from local water bodies, you might increase your health risks. You can contact the Office of Public Health toll free at 1-888-293-7020 for more information about eating fish that contain chemicals.**

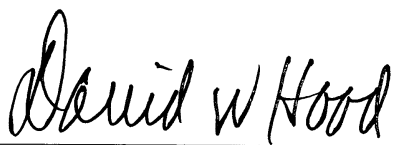
Mercury is an element that occurs naturally in the environment. It is released into the atmosphere through natural processes and human activities. Consequently, there are small amounts of mercury in lakes, rivers and oceans. Nearly all fish contain trace amounts of mercury. They absorb mercury from the water and sediment as they feed on aquatic organisms. Larger predator fish contain more mercury than smaller fish. Therefore, it is recommended that smaller fish be consumed instead of larger ones.

People are exposed throughout their lives to low levels of mercury. One way they can be exposed to mercury is from eating contaminated fish. Health effects from harmful levels of mercury can include nervous system and kidney damage. Developing fetuses are more sensitive to the toxic effects of mercury, especially in the first trimester. In addition to developing fetuses, infants and children are more sensitive to the effects of mercury, therefore, consumption advisories are issued at lower tissue concentration levels for these groups.

This advisory is issued as a precaution. Further sampling will be carried out by DEQ to determine if this advisory is to be continued or modified. If you have consumed largemouth bass, crappie, freshwater drum or bowfin from these waters, it is not likely that there is an immediate need to be concerned about the effect of mercury. However, you should consult your personal doctor if you are concerned.


Jimmy Guidry, M.D.
State Health Officer and Medical Director
Department of Health & Hospitals

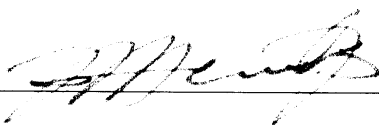

Madeline W. McAndrew
Assistant Secretary, Office of Public Health
Department of Health & Hospitals



David W. Hood
Secretary
Department of Health & Hospitals



L. Hall Bohlinger
Secretary
Department of Environmental Quality



James H. Jenkins, Jr.
Secretary
Department of Wildlife & Fisheries